

# THE MARTINI-ENFIELD RIFLE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## PART II

### The Procurement of .303 inch calibre Martini Arms by Western Australia

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#### ABSTRACT

The procurement of .303 Martini arms by the colony of W.A. between 1893-1900 is traced using the available archival record. It is demonstrated that those procurements relating to Martini-Enfield rifles can be defined as three separate groups, viz, Group one, 200 M-Es (1898), Group two, 200 M-Es (1900) and Group three, at least 251 Unofficial Conversion M-Es (1899-1900). Archival evidence is presented which firmly establishes the historical link between the Group one and Group three arms described in Part I of this paper and W.A.s procurement program described in Part II. A reasonable hypothesis is presented to link the Group two M-E Mark IIs also described in Part I with 200 M-Es ordered in 1900 which are described in Part II.

Two earlier orders for .303 Martini-Metfords and a later order for .303 Lee-Speed Magazine rifles are also addressed to maintain the historical context and chronological continuity.

#### INTRODUCTION

In Part I of "The Martini-Enfield Rifle in Western Australia", three distinct groups of Martini-Enfield rifles were identified and described. These three groups of rifles, respectively the Martini-Enfield Mark I Modified, the Martini-Enfield Mark II Modified and the Unofficial Conversions Mark I Modified, are unique amongst M-E rifles in Australia. The modification which makes them unique consists of fitting the Rigby type nose cap which takes the Pattern 1888 sword bayonet. The fitting of Pattern 1888 bayonets to M-E rifles is a practise adopted by W.A. alone out of all the various recipients of M-E rifles known to date, throughout the British Empire between 1896-1903.

In order to link the three groups of Modified WA Pattern rifles to W.A. it has been necessary to examine the procurement of .303 inch Martini arms of various types by W.A. between the years 1893-1900. Regrettably, no original W.A. arms requisitions containing the details of the rifles ordered, such as their Mark, were found, similarly no W.A. Defence Force arms registers were located which would have confirmed the numbers, marking and issuing of the rifles within W.A. Gaps in the documentary records make it difficult to piece together an exact sequence of events, however, by consulting contemporary military records, government records, production records, treasury records, photographs and finally the arms themselves, it is felt a reasonably accurate historical connection can be established between the actual specimen arms and W.A.s ordering program.

Abbreviations which may be found in the text are as follows:

M-E = Martini-Enfield; M-H = Martini-Henry; M-M = Martini-Metford; Mk = Mark; ML-E

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= Magazine Lee-Enfield; Pat. '95 = Pattern 1895; Pat. '88 = Pattern 1888; RSAF = Royal Small Arms Factories; SMLE = Short, Magazine Lee-Enfield.

### THE PROCUREMENT OF .303 INCH CALIBRE MARTINI ARMS BY W.A.

In 1889, the British Empire adopted the .303 calibre black powder cartridge and the .450 inch black powder Martini-Henry was converted to eventually become the .303 inch Martini-Metford Mark I and Mark II. South Australia, between 1890-1893 acquired by exchange some 500 M-M "hybrid" Mk I rifles with their own S.A. modifications. They had a steel trapdoor in the buttplate for an oil bottle and were sighted for cordite cartridges. Western Australia consequently decided to adopt a similar pattern themselves<sup>1</sup>. In an 1893 letter from the Colonial Secretary's Office in Perth to the W.A. Agent General in London, the Agent General was advised that W.A. had adopted the Martini-Metford<sup>2</sup>, and an 1893-94 W.A. Treasury Public Accounts document gives the order date as 17.1.93.<sup>3</sup> Although no W.A. records were found which included the actual order, it is evident that an order was issued, as 700 Martini-Metfords Mark I Modified were ordered for W.A. from Birmingham Small Arms Co. on 12th April, 1894 for 62 shillings and 9 pence each, on War Office specification 57/20/8142.<sup>4</sup> The W.A. modifications included a brass trapdoor in the buttplate and black powder sighting to 1600 yards. These rifles took the Pattern 1888 sword bayonet. Evidently there was some delay in delivery as the W.A. Colonial Secretary wrote to the Agent-General in London twice in 1895 declaring his concern at their non-arrival.<sup>5</sup> They did however arrive between July and December in 1895 and appear for the first time in the W.A. Naval and Military Returns for that year.<sup>6</sup> In the Report of the W.A. Commandant of Local Forces for the year ending 30th June 1896 it is stated "during the past year seven hundred (700) Martini-Metford rifles have been received and taken on charge. It would be desirable to obtain 200 more".<sup>7</sup> These Martini-Metford Mark Is appear in numerous photographs of the 1895-1900 period. (Figures 1, 3).<sup>8</sup> The mention of the desirability of acquiring "200 more" Martini-Metfords evidently received a favourable response because a Royal Small Arms Factory (RSAF) Enfield production manuscript describes 200 Martin-Metford Mark II rifles as being produced "for West Australia" on Extension 782 of 30.4.97". They were sighted for black powder, and it was also noted that the rifle "Takes Sword bayonet Martini-Henry Rifle pattern 1887".<sup>9</sup> Again, no order from W.A. was found but a W.A. Treasury Public Accounts Report for 1897-98 shows a large expenditure for "Small Arms and their Maintenance" for that precise period indicating the arrival of the arms in 1898.<sup>10</sup> The M-M Mark IIs also appear in a number of photographs (Figure 4) taken in 1900. The photographs show these rifles in the hands of men of the Third and Fourth W.A. Contingents to South Africa<sup>11</sup> and the Naval and Military Returns for 1900 show a total of 891 Martini-Metfords on issue, indicating that the second lot of 200 Mark II rifles did in fact arrive.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Temple B.A. and Skennerton I.D. "Treatise on the British Military Martini" Vol. 1 (1983) Vol 2 (1989). Privately Published Qld. Pp 387-395.

<sup>2</sup> Battye Library CSO Letter Register of 1893, 111/93 Number 969.

<sup>3</sup> Treasury Department Archives, Estimates of Public Accounts of the Government of W.A. 1893-94. (See Table 4).

<sup>4</sup> *Op.Cit.* Temple and Skennerton p.392. Although 1894 is given in this work, all specimens noted are dated 1895.

<sup>5</sup> Battye Library. CSO Letter Register of 1893, 11/93 1138, 111/93 1654.

<sup>6</sup> Battye Library. W.A. Naval and Military Estimates. Quoted in the W.A. Statistical Register for 1895.

<sup>7</sup> Battye Library. Quoted in Votes and Proceedings of WA Parliament 1896.

<sup>8</sup> Battye Library Photograph Collection (Figure 1) and Rae Bros (Eds) "How Westralia's Sons Served the Empire." Melbourne 1900. (Figure 3)

<sup>9</sup> RSAF Archives. Unsigned, undated manuscript of production (apparently compiled by an employee interested in the production details of the various rifles over the years).

<sup>10</sup> Treasury Department Archives. Estimates of Public Accounts of the Govt. of W.A. 1897-1898. (See Table 4).

<sup>11</sup> Rae Bros. (Eds.) "How Westralia's Sons Served the Empire" Melbourne 1900 pp 69-85.

<sup>12</sup> Battye Library. Quoted in W.A. Statistical Register for 1900.

An undated, unsourced list entitled "Issues of .303" Arms made to the Colonies since Introduction" shows W.A. receiving to May 1898, "900 Converted Rifles".<sup>13</sup>

In the same order, or at least arriving in the same year and making up the remainder of the large expenditure on Small Arms in the 1898 year, was a lot of 200 Martini-Enfield Mark I Modified, W.A. Pattern rifles. No W.A. order was found which identifies this lot of arms, but an exchange of correspondence between the British Colonial Secretary and the Governor of W.A. exists which addresses them. In response to the already quoted 1896 Report of the W.A. Commandant of Local Forces in which he states that "it would be desirable... to convert all the Martini-Henry rifles on charge to Martini-Enfield rifles (owing to an improvement in the rifling, the "Martini-Metford is now known as the "Martini-Enfield"), the British Government in a secret Defence Committee Colonial Office Despatch, made an offer on 27 August 1897 to *exchange* our old Martini-Henrys for the new Magazine Lee-Enfields or the newly converted M-Es. The British despatch containing the details of the offer was not located but the subsequent correspondence confirms that W.A. opted (probably on the grounds of cost) to accept the M-Es.

"With regard to the recommendation contained in his report for 1895-65, that M-M rifles on charge should be converted to M-Es they would point out that the offer of HMG contained in the C.O. Despatch dated 27 August 1897 will enable this to be carried out under conditions advantageous to the colony. In considering the questions of re-armament it is desirable however that the Colonial Government should have in mind that an enemy attacking the colony will almost certainly be armed with magazine rifles. The M-E is only a single-loader, and troops carrying such rifles would be under a serious disadvantage in meeting the attack of an enemy using a superior weapon. The cost of the L-E is £4.6.1. If the colony are not at the present time however prepared to face the expense of arming its forces with magazine rifles it is to be hoped that the offer of the M-E rifles by HMG will be accepted, thus securing the advantage of the use of the same ammunition as that of the Army and Navy".<sup>14</sup>

The W.A. Martini-Henrys (presumed to be 200), were sent in late 1897 or early 1898 and exchanged for 200 M-E Is. W.A. however did not undertake a simple exchange of arms, instead it requested that the exchange M-E rifles be first modified to accept the Pattern 1888 sword bayonet so that these new M-Es would conform to the 1895 order of 700 Martini-Metford Mark I rifles which took the Pattern 1888. The RSAF Enfield supplier complied with this request as the production records at Enfield show. The RSAF Enfield Annual Accounts of the Ordnance Factories for the Year 1897-98 lists "200 M-E Mark I, fitted to take the Pattern 1888 sword bayonet. Rate, 2 shillings 7 1/4 pence each"<sup>15</sup> indicating that the arms were already converted Sealed Pattern M-E Mark Is taken from store and modified for the Pattern 1888 bayonet by having the new Rigby one piece nose cap/bayonet boss fitted. There is also a note in the production manuscript to the effect that 200 M-E Is were "fitted for S.B. Patt. 88" and "sighted for black Powder for West Australia".<sup>16</sup> On 17th December 1898 a despatch to W.A. was received which clarifies the nature of the offer of 27 August 1897. Evidently, some of the exchanged W.A. Martini-Henrys were unfit for future conversion as subsequent correspondence from the Colonial Secretary in England to the Governor of W.A. states:

"With regard to Secret Despatch of 27th August 1897 respecting this exchange of Martini-Henrys for Martini-Enfield rifles, I have the honour to inform you that as the arms returned have in some instances proved to be unfit for conversion the War Office have requested that in the case of future

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<sup>13</sup> Public Records Office, London. (Supplied by Mr B.A. Temple.)

<sup>14</sup> Battye Library. Secret and Confidential Despatches from Sec. of State to Governor of W.A. 1898. Acc. 391.

<sup>15</sup> RSAF Archives - Annual Accounts for the Ordnance Factories 1897-98 pp 220-221.

<sup>16</sup> RSAF Archives. Unsigned, undated manuscript of production.



**Table 1** Expenditure on Small Arms and their Maintenance

Year ending 30th June	Budget Estimate	Actual Expenditure	Under Expenditure	Excess Expenditure	Reason for under or excess expenditure
1893-94	2984	39.17.0	2944.3.0		New rifles ordered 17.1.93 not arrived
1894-95	2500	3223.12.4		723.12.4.	(not explained)
1895-96	150	134.2.7		14.5.1	Erroneous debits
1896-97	2000	41.0.0	1959		Stores not arrived from England
1897-98	2359	1113.9.0	1245		-ditto-
1898-99	300	189.5.0	110.15.0		Votes in excess of requirements
1899-1900	800	120.5.6	659.14.6		Agent-General's account received too late for payment
1900-01	2000	5250.8.10		2505.5.10	Payment for 1000 rifles ordered in previous year

Note: All amounts are in pounds.

consignments none may be sent home which are not considered by the Colonial Military authorities to be in thoroughly good condition except as regards to the barrels".<sup>17</sup>

This document is confirmation that W.A. availed itself of the exchange scheme and that 200 M-E Is modified at RSAF Enfield for W.A. in 1898 undoubtedly originated there. That these two fairly large quantities of arms arrived in 1895 (700 M-M Is) and again in 1898 (200 M-M IIs, 200 M-E Is) is supported by the already mentioned W.A. Government expenditures for Small Arms in those years (see Table 1) and also by the expenditure listed by the W.A. Agent-General in London for its Military Adviser on military stores in the years 1893, 1894 and 1898.<sup>18</sup> The Military Adviser who "passed all Arms, Ammunition, and Military Stores requisitioned for" sent accounts for his services which coincide with the dates of the two lots of arms. The M-Es also appear for the first time in the W.A. Naval and Military Returns for 1898 where 89 are listed as being on issue to the Geraldton Rifle Volunteers at Geraldton<sup>19</sup> (Figures 1, 2). These Geraldton issue arms have been positively identified as Mark I Modified, WA Pattern in Figure 2. These arms conform to the specifications of the Group one arms described in Part I of this paper.

Table 1 shows the large expenditure for the financial years 1894-5, 1897-8 and 1900-1, which coincide with the acquisitions of the arms of this study.

After the receipt of the 200 M-M IIs and 200 M-E Is in 1898, the following year, 1899, saw little movement in Small Arms acquisitions but as the tension in South Africa was obviously leading to war, military preparedness was becoming more important in government and military circles. The need for more arms and military stores became a pressing matter in 1899 and 1900 and with

<sup>17</sup> Battye Library. Secret and Confidential Despatches from Sec. of State to Governor of WA 1898 Acc 391. No subsequent correspondence was found which clarified the number of WA Martini-Henrys exchanged or the number of arms unfit for conversion. It is also not known whether W.A. made up this number of unfit arms by sending any additional Martini-Henrys.

<sup>18</sup> Battye Library. Annual Reports of the Agent General 1893-1904.

<sup>19</sup> Battye Library. W.A. Returns for Naval and Military Expenditure. Quoted in W.A. Statistical Register 1898.



**Figure 1** W.A. Mounted Infantry of the Boer War. There are two distinct groups of soldiers. One group is armed with W.A. Pattern Martini-Metfords Mark I (back row, L-R 1, 4, 6; Front row, centre) the other with W.A. Pattern Martini-Enfields Mark I. (back row, L-R, 3,5,; front row 1,3.) Each group of men wear distinctly different uniforms. It is thought the group armed with Martini-Enfields are members of the Geraldton Rifle Volunteers who are posing with men of a Contingent to the Boer War c.1900. All men are armed with the Pattern 1888 bayonet. (Photo courtesy of Geraldton Historical Society. Battye Library 29789P)

the British Military having priority over colonials in the matter of obtaining ships and transports for war material and troops, W.A. was forced to endure delays in the arrival of military stores from England. The Report of the Commandant of Local Forces for the year ending 30th June 1899 asks the W.A. Government for Defence expenditure votes to be made to expand the number of companies in the W.A. Defence Force, partly due to the British recommendation that W.A. should have arms and equipment to serve at least 1500 men<sup>20</sup> and also partly due to the South African political situation. He also states that "it will be necessary in the near future to provide for a reserve of rifles, there being at present practically none". Reinforcing the intention to convert WA Martini-Henrys to .303 inch (initially voiced in his 1896 Report) the Commandant goes on to say "There are 574 Martini-Henry rifles in store which it is proposed to convert into .303 M-E rifles at an early date".<sup>21</sup> These points were evidently attended to, as by his next report in June 1900, the Commandant reports that he has established 11 new Corps of Infantry, each corps consisting of

<sup>20</sup> Battye Library. Secret and Confidential Despatches from Colonial Secretary to Governor of WA 1898 Acc 391.

<sup>21</sup> Battye Library. Quoted in Votes and Proceedings of the WA Parliament 1899.





**Figure 2** Four members of the Geraldton Rifle Volunteers armed with the Martini-Enfield Rifle Mark I Modified, W.A. Pattern and the Pattern 1888 sword Bayonet. (Courtesy of the Geraldton Historical Society. Batty Library 2302B.)



**Figure 3** Soldiers of the Second Contingent prior to departure for South Africa. The men are armed with a mixture of W.A. Pattern Martini-Metfords Mark I and Martini-Enfields Mark I. (front row, L-R) troopers 4, 6, 7 and the NCO on the right are armed with the Martini-Enfield. Obvious differences are the shorter barrel and the different sling placement of the Enfields. (Photo D. Elford, W.A.M.)



**Figure 4** This photograph shows members of the Fourth Contingent (The Imperial Bushmen) prior to departure for South Africa. The photograph illustrates a mixture of arms which include the Martini-Metford Mk II in the hands of the trooper seated in the front of the group. The troopers in the front row 5,7,8,9,10 (from left), are holding what appear to be Unofficial Conversions, identified by their short barrels and their sling attachment which is from nose cap to trigger guard like the original Martini-Henrys from which they were converted. The lack of any provision for a butt sling swivel indicates that they are not Enfield products like the Martini-Enfield Mk Is and IIs of Figures 1, 2 and 3. (Photo D. Elford, W.A.M.)

60 men. In addition he has raised four new Mounted Infantry Contingents for South Africa as well as raising three corps of Volunteer Mounted Infantry with others proposed for the following year. The Karrakatta range was in constant use training the first two contingents to South Africa who took, in addition to training use, a "very large" amount of ammunition and 219 rifles to South Africa.<sup>22</sup> In the matter of Small Arms and the need to expand his stores the Commandant continued with a reference to rifles. "Since last years report, 200 .303 M-E rifles have been ordered from England, and ought to arrive shortly. There are now 251 Martini-Henry rifles in store, which will be converted to .303 M-E rifles, as the necessary parts arrive from England".<sup>23</sup> The importance of this report cannot be overstated. It clarifies two important points. Firstly, it confirms that W.A. did indeed convert W.A. Defence Force Martini-Henrys into Martini-Enfields locally, using parts supplied from England. These Martini-Henrys were acquired and issued in 1874<sup>24</sup> and 1890<sup>25</sup> and were on issue until replaced by the .303 inch Martini-Metford beginning in 1895. These Martini-Henrys are undoubtedly the source of the Unofficial Conversions located by the survey. According to the Local Commandant's June 1900 Report these local conversions number at least 251 (Figure 4). These W.A. converted arms conform to the description of the Group Three arms described in Part I.

<sup>22</sup> Batty Library. Report of the Commandant of Local Forces for the year ended 30th June 1900. Quoted in the Votes and Proceedings of the W.A. Parliament 1900.

<sup>23</sup> Batty Library. Quoted in Votes and Proceedings of WA Parliament 1900.

<sup>24</sup> Weick, G. The Volunteer Movement in Western Australia 1861-1903. Paterson Brokensha, Perth. n.d. Pp38, 70.

<sup>25</sup> Batty Library. WA Returns for Naval and Military Expenditure. Quoted in the W.A. Yearbook 1890 (583 Martini-Henry rifles of .450 calibre).



**Table 2** Martini-Enfield Mk I and II production totals for the years 1896-1903.

	M-H III conv: M-E I	M-H II conv: M-E II
1896	20,069	1
1897	26,205	1
1898	1,759	520
1899	-	-
1900	-	13,042
1901	-	17,149
1902	461	1,871
1903	116	439

In confirming the origin and number of the 1900 group of 251 Unofficial Conversions the question of the discrepancy between the numbers of Martini-Henrys mentioned in the Commandant's June 1899 Report (574) and the June 1900 Report (251) must be addressed. These figures indicate that 323 Martini-Henrys have left the store between these dates. It is not known whether these arms were sent elsewhere in W.A.<sup>26</sup> or sent to England in exchange for the 200 M-Es ordered from there "since last years report" (i.e. between June 1899 and June 1900), and to also make up for the unspecified number of "unfit" arms sent to England by W.A. in 1897-98. In view of the Commandants clear intentions (commencing in 1896) to convert these arms to Martini-Enfields it is also quite possible that these arms were indeed converted locally "at an early date", from parts purchased in the earlier budget outlays of 1897-99 (Table 1). Because of the uncertainty of the ultimate fate of these 323 rifles, they are only recorded as Exchange/Unofficial Conversions/Surplus with a question mark, and listed in Table 3.

The second point of importance is that another lot of 200 M-E rifles in addition to the first lot of 200 M-Es of 1898, have been ordered "since last years report" i.e. between 1st July 1899 and 30th June 1900. Although the Mark of M-E is not stated, and there is no record to link the 1900 dated M-E Mark IIs located by the survey with this 1900 order for 200 M-Es, the M-E *Mark I Modified*, WA Pattern is referred to in the 1900 RSAF Enfield records. It is believed that this reference may explain the Group two M-Es of 1900 described in Part I. The Annual Accounts of the Ordnance Factories for 1899-1900 show "100 Martini-Enfield Mark I, fitted to take the pattern 1888 sword bayonet. Rate 4 shillings 10 1/4 pence"<sup>27</sup> indicating again that already converted Sealed Pattern arms were taken from store and modified for the Pattern 1888 bayonet. In this case, unlike the 700 M-M Is of 1895, the 200 M-M IIs and the first lot of 200 M-E Is of 1898, there is no record in the production manuscript to indicate where these 100 arms were sent, however, in view of W.A.s known unique association with this type of arm it presents a strong possibility that W.A. was the destination. These 100 M-E Is coincide with W.A.s known 1900 order for 200 M-Es, also, the modification conforms to the W.A. Pattern. It is relevant here to also refer to the RSAF Enfield production records which show that during the years 1899-1901 *no Mark I M-Es* at all were converted there (see Table 2). Therefore the 100 M-E Mark Is referred to in the Annual Accounts of the Ordnance Factories must have been taken from stock still remaining on hand from the 1896-98 production run. Considering the strong demand from the various colonies it is certain that

<sup>26</sup> Dominion Returns for Land Forces to 31st December 1904, show that W.A. still had 287 Martini-Henry rifles and 26 carbines, for a total of 313. These may be the remainder of the 323 under discussion here. (These Returns totals were quoted by B.A. Temple and I. Skennerton in private correspondence. 18.7.91, 18.3.92.)

<sup>27</sup> RSAF Archives. Annual Accounts for the Ordnance Factories 1899-1900. pp. 240-241



stocks of M-Es were virtually exhausted by 1900 and not enough Martini-Henry Mark IIIs or parts remained on hand to convert more, therefore RSAF Enfield reactivated its conversion facility and commenced production of M-E IIs (from Martini-Henry IIs) in order to satisfy continuing demand for .303 inch Martini-Enfields from around the world. If RSAF Enfield had large stocks of M-E Is still in store from the 1896-98 production or Martini-Henry Mark IIIs or parts from which to make more, this time and cost conscious organization would have utilized these instead of changing to M-E Mark II production, especially at this busy (Boer War) time. It is highly probable that Mark II production commenced in earnest in 1900 because no more Mark Is could be produced. It is likely therefore that if the 100 M-E Is described in the RSAF records for 1899-1900 were indeed sent to W.A. then it is also likely that RSAF Enfield filled the remainder of W.A.'s 1900 order for 200 M-Es by augmenting the 100 M-E Is with 100 M-E IIs from current 1900 production, which was the only source of M-Es available at that date. This augmentation would certainly explain the existence of the Group two RSAF converted, 1900 dated, W.A. marked M-E Mark II, Modified, WA Patterns located by the survey and described in Part I. As the documentary record at RSAF contains omissions and gaps due to loss it may never be possible to verify this matter archivally.

The hypothesis presented which illustrates the possibility that a mixed lot of M-E Is and IIs were sent to W.A. would be established by the location of documentary evidence or a pre 1899 dated, RSAF Enfield converted M-E Mark I rifle with the characteristics of the 1900 dated Mark IIs described in Part I. That is, a Mark I M-E, modified to the same specifications as the survey Mark IIs. It should have cordite sighting and a non bored-through nose cap, (as the clearing rod was abolished in May 1899). The cordite sighting was necessary as by 1900 no more black powder ammunition was manufactured and W.A., having exhausted its stock of black powder ammunition by 1900,<sup>28</sup> was by then acquiring cordite sighted arms, as evidenced by the 1900 dated M-E IIs. A modified Mark I such as that which has just been described would be readily identifiable as being different from the Group One M-E Is and indeed, would constitute a new sub-variation in it's own right.

From the archival record it can be calculated that the 1900 order for 200 M-Es and conversion parts for the additional 251 Unofficial Conversions was made in early 1900.<sup>29</sup> They arrived, accompanied by 1000 .303 inch Lee-Speed Magazine repeating rifles between July and December 1900. The 200 M-Es are listed as being sent in May 1900<sup>30</sup>, and 821 Lee-Speeds were listed as on issue in the Naval and Military Returns for that year.<sup>31</sup> This large order for "small arms and their maintenance" is referred to in the Public Accounts document (Table 1) where an unbudgeted excess of 2505 pounds was expended for "1000 rifles ordered in the previous (financial) year", i.e. between July 1899 and June 1900. Between 1895-1900, the Martini-Metfords of 1895, the M-E Is of 1898 (Geraldton) and the Lee-Speeds of 1900 are recorded in official Returns together with the Volunteer units to which they were issued. The 1900 M-Es and Unofficial Conversions appear to have been issued exclusively to the various Boer War contingents and unlike the Volunteers arms are therefore not recorded on the W.A. Returns of 1899 and 1900. The submission of Annual Returns by W.A. ceased after 1900.

<sup>28</sup> Battye Library, Colonial Secretary Telegram to the Agent general in London Jan. 8, 1901 confirming the taking of 52,400 rounds of .303 ammunition to south Africa by the First and Second Contingents. C.S.O. 18/227.

<sup>29</sup> Battye Library Newspaper Archives. West Australian 23 February 1900. It is noted that the Premier, in response to concern that all the arms in the colony had now been issued to the contingents, ordered more.

<sup>30</sup> Public Records Office, London. "Issues of .303" Arms made to the Colonies since Introduction." (supplied by B.A. Temple).

<sup>31</sup> Battye Library, W.A. Naval and Military Expenditure. Quoted in W.A. Statistical Register 1900.

**Table 3** Procurement of .303 inch Martini Arms by W.A. 1893-1900.

Arm	Number	Order	Received	Sights	Bayonets
Martini-Metford Mk I	700	17.1.1893	1895	Black Powder	Pat. '88
Martini-Metford Mk II	200	30.4.1897	1898	Black Powder	Pat. '87
Martini-Enfield Mk I	200	27.8.1897	1898	Black Powder	Pat. '88
Exchange/Unofficial Conversion/Surplus?	323	1899/1900			
Martini-Enfield (Mk I & II)	200	Feb. 1900	1900	Cordite	Pat. '88
Unofficial Conversion Martini-Enfield Mk I	251	Feb. 1900	1900	Unknown, probably cordite	
Magazine Lee-Speed	1000	Jan. Feb. 1900	1900	Unknown, probably cordite	Pat. '88

These arms described in the archival record and listed in Table 3 are the last procured by W.A. at the end of the colonial period. On January 1st 1901 W.A. became a State in the new Commonwealth and all subsequent arms purchases were controlled by the Commonwealth.

No other type of Martini-Enfield arm is known to have been procured and issued in W.A. prior to 1901. There is a recommendation in a Military Report of the Commandant of Local Forces (dated 19.9.1898) by Lt. Col. A. Wilson, that "Senior Cadets be issued with M-E carbines"<sup>32</sup> and Skennerton states that M-E Carbines Mark I were issued in W.A. in "small numbers".<sup>33</sup> The author found no archival or photographic evidence to support this. It is possible that M-E carbines were issued in W.A. after Federation<sup>34</sup> but none have been noted here with W.A. markings. This type of arm also fixes the Pattern 1888 bayonet.

## CONCLUSION

It can be seen from the archival records previously discussed, that the procurement of .303 inch Martini-Enfields by W.A. between 1898-1900 is essentially reduced to three major acquisitions or groups. Group one are the 200 M-E Mark Is of 1898, group two are the 200 M-E Marks (possibly mixed Is and IIs) of 1900 and group three are the Unofficial Conversions converted from W.A. Defence Force Martini-Henrys between 1899-1900. These local conversions number at least 251 and may be higher. It has been demonstrated that the three groups of arms as described in "The Martini-Enfield Rifle In Western Australia" Part I, fit precisely into the order periods and order descriptions recorded in the archival documents. The M-E Is of 1898 and the Unofficial Conversions of 1899-1900 described in Part I are unquestionably the arms ordered by W.A. as recorded in Part II of this paper. The establishment of the survey M-E IIs of 1900 as part of this ordering process is quite compelling but must await the location of corroborating archival evidence

<sup>32</sup> Battye Library. Colonial Office Microfilm. Military Report C.O. 80/225.

<sup>33</sup> Skennerton, I.D. "Australian Service Longarms" Privately Published. Qld 1975 p. 120.

<sup>34</sup> Battye Library "Commonwealth Parliamentary Act, Cadet Forces Australia 1904". "Adoption by Secondary School Senior Cadets of .303 M-E (single loader)" p. 3.

There is no mention of M-E carbines in the "Issue of .303: Arms made to the Colonies since Introduction" referred to earlier in this discussion. This list however does contain omissions of known shipments so is not completely comprehensive.

and/or the location of further specimens as discussed in the text. A reasonable hypothesis has been presented which illustrates the possibility of a mixed lot of M-E Is and IIs arriving in 1900. Only further research will establish, modify or reject this hypothesis.